

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS COLOMBO 000833

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EB A/S ANTHONY WAYNE; SA/INS FOR J. BRENNIG, N.
DEAN; PLEASE PASS TO TSUNAMI RECONSTRUCTION TASK FORCE;
TREASURY FOR C. CARNES

SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAID](#) [ECON](#) [PGOV](#) [CE](#) [MV](#)

SUBJECT: SRI LANKAN POST-TSUNAMI RECONSTRUCTION UPDATE (MAY
04, 2005)

Ref: a) Colombo 811 b) Colombo 826 c) Colombo 813

This cable is for participants in the May 4 Tsunami IAWG
Meeting.

1) (U) Per updates from USAID/DART in refs A and B, on the
ground coordination of relief and transition efforts remains
largely positive, but with logistical problems primarily
related to land allocation and continued uncertainty over
the 100/200 meter buffer zone. Ref C provides an update on
Chinese post-tsunami assistance, following the visit of
Premier Wen Jiabao.

May 12 Private Sector Conference

12. (SBU) Mano Tittawella, TAFREN Chairman, and two or three
private sector representatives will attend on behalf of Sri
Lanka. Tittawella has offered himself for meetings with USG
officials on May 11 and SA/INS is working on setting up
specific meetings. Maldives plans to send the following
participants: Hon. Abdullah Kamaludeen, Minister of
Employment and Labour; Mr. Sim Ibrahim Mohamed, Secretary
General of the Maldives Association of the Tourism Industry;
Mr. Ibrahim Waheed, President of the Maldives Association of
the Construction Industry; and one delegate from the
Maldives National Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

100/200 Meter Setback

13. (SBU) During a May 3 conversation with Econchief,
Tittawella said he thought the GSL would begin to relax its
requirements on the 100/200 meter rule once 25,000
transitional houses had been constructed. This will have
moved those that were able to move easily out of the coastal
zone, and allow the GSL to focus primarily on those tough
cases where exceptions may be warranted. While Tittawella
was optimistic on this front (and his proximity to the
President gives his opinion solid credibility), we continue
to hear from other sources that the President remains rigid
on this issue. Much will depend on how fast the remaining
transitional shelter is completed and how quickly the land
for permanent housing is allocated. Regarding the
possibility of a low-key USG sponsored DVC on coastal zone
management, Tittawella was encouraging and thought such a
program would be timely.

VAT

14. (SBU) We have still not received satisfactory answers on
the USAID value added tax exemption issue. We are meeting
with the Finance Ministry again today to discuss and will
update next week.

Joint Mechanism for Aid to North-East

15. (U) The President has made a fairly positive statement on
the need for the joint mechanism during a May 3 meeting with
religious leaders. Septel to follow.

ENTWISTLE